

# **Cultural Resources Survey of the Brownlee Reservoir Drawdown Zone and Reservoir Margin, Washington and Adams Counties, Idaho; Baker and Malheur Counties, Oregon**

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Technical Report Appendix E.4-3**

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**1. INTRODUCTION:** In 1997 and 1999 surveys were conducted of accessible terraces and bars in the draw down zone which were not silt covered, using 5-20 meter transects. In 2000 reservoir margin surveys were conducted within a 0.1 mile corridor. A boat and reconnaissance were used to examine the reservoir margin from Brownlee Dam, south to Quicksand Creek, and on much of the Powder River.

**2. CONCLUSIONS:** Eighty-four new sites and 13 previously recorded sites were recorded. Six sites were considered eligible to the National Register and 30 sites were considered potentially eligible pending further testing. Fluctuating pool levels cause erosion and draw down exposure provides increased opportunity for artifact collections.

## **Study Adequacy:**

- From a review of the inventory maps it appears that not all likely areas exposed during draw down were inventoried, and no information is provided as to why some areas that are routinely exposed were not inventoried in 1997. Survey areas in 1997 were identified by Idaho Power Company from record searches and helicopter reconnaissance. BLM believes that even areas which appear from a helicopter to be silted over should be examined more closely on the ground. The draw down survey appears to be incomplete.
- BLM questions the appropriateness of "reconnaissance" methods for the shoreline inventory in the less accessible areas of Brownlee Reservoir. The reservoir survey appears to be incomplete.

The Brownlee survey identified the following sites on Oregon BLM lands along Brownlee Reservoir (Mauser et al 2001: 43-71). BLM agrees with the consulting archaeologists and Idaho Power Company eligibility assessments as depicted in the following table:

<u>Site Number</u>	<u>Eligibility Assessments</u>	
	<u>NWAA/IPC</u>	<u>BLM</u>
IPCB 97-01 (OR)	Not Eligible	Not Eligible
IPCB 97-02 (OR)	Potentially Eligible	Potentially Eligible
IPCB 97-03 (OR)	Eligible	Eligible
IPCB 97-06 (OR)	Not Eligible	Not Eligible
IPCB 97-17 (OR)	Not Eligible	Not Eligible

IPCB 97-18 (OR)	Potentially Eligible	Potentially Eligible
IPCB 00-70 (OR)	Potentially Eligible	Potentially Eligible
IPCB 00-73 (OR)	Not Eligible	Not Eligible (post 1938)
IPCB 00-74 (OR)	Potentially Eligible	Potentially Eligible
IPCB 00-75 (OR)	Potentially Eligible	Potentially Eligible
IPCB 00-76 (OR)	Not Eligible (Isolate)	Not Eligible
IPCB 00-80 (OR)	Potentially Eligible	Potentially Eligible

### Specific Comments

Page 28: "During the 1997 draw down, diagnostic artifacts were collected for further analysis and placed in plastic bags labeled by site number.....These artifacts were submitted to IPCV following analysis. In 1999 several artifacts were collected at sites revisited when foot prints of possible collectors were noted. These, too, were forwarded to IPC...."

*BLM requests information on the present disposition and curation of artifacts collected. Artifacts should be submitted for long term curation at the designated Oregon state repository at the University of Oregon.*

Page 49: IPCBD-97-01: This appears to be the only remaining evidence for placer mining within this reach of the Snake River. The site record for this historic placer mining site does not indicate that there are any artifacts associated with, or in, the placer tailings located below high water.

*BLM would agree that the site is not eligible for the National Register, only because of the absence of associated artifacts. However, BLM also believes that during draw down events this site should be monitored to ascertain that there are no presently obscured cultural deposits or artifacts that may become exposed. Also, if any development is proposed in the site area - such as construction of a low water boat ramp - the construction work should be monitored for archaeological deposits.*

p. 73: "Two other effects of the reservoir on sites concern preservation of organic cultural and mechanical damage caused by historic and modern use. Saturated conditions or alternating wet-dry states can profoundly affect the preservation of hide, bone, wood, seeds, shell or fiber artifacts.....Other agents of disturbance to sites in the reservoir include historic roads and railroads, agricultural and mining practices, modern recreational use from boat wakes to camping to intentional vandalism."

*BLM agrees that, in addition to erosion, deflation, and siltation, inundation and the other agents of disturbance are among the past, present, and ongoing effects to sites in the reservoir.*

P. 78: "A research design for testing and data recovery should be developed that addresses the assemblages of sites as a whole from a regional perspective."

*BLM agrees that further documentation, testing or further historic research would be necessary to reach final determinations of eligibility for some sites on BLM lands in Oregon.*

p. 78: "As part of additional evaluation work, the following could be undertaken...studies to assess the geomorphology and geochronology of the reach including terrace and alluvial fan formation...."

*BLM agrees that this study would provide valuable information for evaluating sites and understanding the prehistory of the Snake River reach.*

## **BLM Conclusions and Recommendations**

BLM agrees with the eligibility assessments as indicated in the preceding table. BLM believes that the inventory data is incomplete for draw down zones, areas of dispersed recreation and for the reach between Quicksilver Creek and Brownlee Dam, and the Powder River arm, on the Oregon side of the Snake River.

### **Recommendations**

1. Draw down areas need to be systematically inventoried each year, until all areas exposed during draw downs have been examined. Thereafter, periodic re-examination over the term of the license is needed to adjust to changes in surface conditions and exposure.
2. Areas in the "reconnaissance" zone need to be further sampled by on the ground survey, especially along the reservoir margin between Quicksilver Creek and Brownlee Dam and on the Powder River arm.
3. A final determination of eligibility for "potentially eligible" sites is needed to assess effects of the FERC 1971 project under regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Studies are needed to make final determinations for IPCBD 00-74 (historic cabin); IPCBD 97-02 (railroad siding); IPCBD 00-75 (Goodell Wagon Road); IPCBD 00-80 (Connor Ditch), and IPCBD 00-70 (lithic scatter).
4. Based on the description of effects to sites at the reservoir margin and in the draw down zone, a program of aggressive annual monitoring is needed for IPCBD 97-03 and the five sites listed in item #3 above. For inundated sites, monitoring should be scheduled when draw down occurs. Monitoring should continue annually until protection, stabilization, or data recovery takes place.